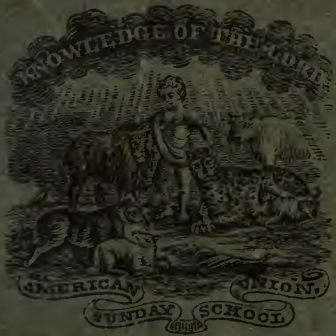
No. 100. V. SERIES.

MEMOIR

OF

ANN ELIZA STARR,

OF CONNECTICUT.

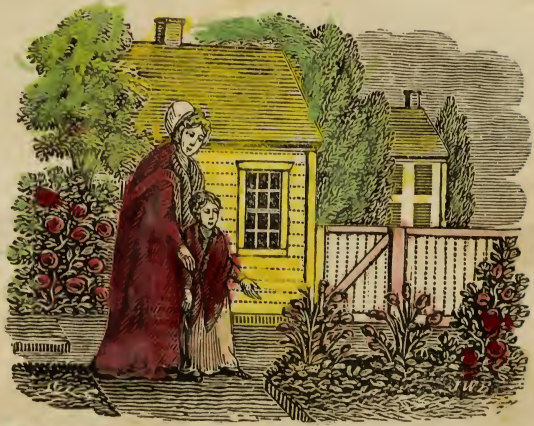


PHILADELPHIA:

No. 148 Chesnut Street.

1827.

Stereotyped by L. Johnson.



"[illegible] made these come up, if he does not raise *me* up." *See page* 19.

MEMOIR

OF

ANN ELIZA STARR,

OF CONNECTICUT.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION, AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.
PHILADELPHIA:
NO. 146 CHESNUT STREET.

According to my best recollection, from repeated visits and conversations with the subject of this Memoir, in my official capacity, the following narrative contains a correct statement of facts.

SAMUEL MERWIN.

Pastor of the United Soc. in New-Haven.

New-Haven, January, 1826.

MEMOIR

OF

ANN ELIZA STARR.

It was early in the summer of 1825, that I became acquainted with Ann Eliza Starr, a youthful and decided follower of Jesus, who was doomed, long ere her sun had reached its meridian height, to descend to an early tomb. A bud she seemed of uncommon sweetness, which promised fair to blossom in so cold a world as this: but it was soon torn from its tender stem, by the rude hand of death, and transplanted, we doubt not, to the garden of Paradise, there to bloom forever. Often when at twilight's evening hour I visited her, did I wish that some recording pen would convey to the world the sayings of this "dy-

ing saint!" Long in our hearts shall we cherish the remembrance of her intellectual worth, and unfeigned piety; and as due to her, whose remains now slumber beneath yonder grassy mound, but whose soul, we trust, has ascended to God, who hath redeemed it; do we propose to make mention, not only of the disease which fed upon the springs of life, but more particularly of the progress of her Christian attainments.

I would here relate some facts respecting the early history of her family. She was the youngest daughter of Henry and Clarissa Starr, of Litchfield, in Connecticut. During the late war with Great Britain, her father obtained a Lieutenant's commission in the United States army, in which service he continued until the close of the war, in 1815, when he returned to his family, and shortly after removed them to New-Haven, where he pursued his former mechanical business. In the summer of 1817, while on a journey to the north, he was taken sick at Albany, and after a short illness, died on the 6th of August. His wife was deeply afflicted, being left in

feeble health, with three young children, and with but very slender means for their support. They were at this time with their friends at Litchfield. At the age of three years, Ann Eliza went with her grandmother, to live with an uncle and aunt, in the city of New York; and while there, lived also with another uncle, a clergyman, and attended his school. At this period, she became very serious and thoughtful, and although we have no evidence of her conversion, yet she was convinced of her sinfulness, felt her need of a Saviour, and prayed often for forgiveness. Although the impression then made upon her mind, never entirely wore away, yet she became less anxious, and gradually returned to the vanities and amusements of childhood. In November, 1823, her mother *died*, after an illness of two months. Her health had been declining for many years, and she had often been greatly distressed on account of her sins, and it is hoped that she fled to Christ for refuge, though she never enjoyed that peace of mind which she apparently so much desired, until her last illness, when Jesus drawing

near to assist her through the dark valley, she was enabled to triumph over death and the grave. Ann Eliza, after the death of her mother, went to live with a friend in Goshen, Connecticut.

In the spring preceding her dissolution, it was thought expedient by her friends that she should come to New-Haven, and assist her aunt in keeping a school. At this time she was but ten years of age. Reader, judge of her intellectual worth, when at this inexperienced period in life, she was called to the performance of so arduous a duty! Previous to this, (while in Goshen,) she had been visited with distressing illness, (the typus fever,) which threatened the termination of life; but her Heavenly Father in goodness raised her from a bed of languishing, that she might be enabled to speak of redeeming love, and leave to all her friends the comforting assurance, that for her to die was a gain. After a few weeks, when health seemed partially restored, she went into the school as an assistant, and took charge of a class of children, some older than herself: here her ambition exceeded her

strength, and her health became impaired; she, however, continued her exertions even until she fainted in the school, through weakness; and here ended all the efforts she was to make for those children. Here we would remark, that it was a striking trait of her character, that she seldom, if ever, complained of *illness* or injuries. If she was ill, it was known only by her looks; and if injured, she was found alone weeping.

Although not insensible to affronts, she was seldom known to be angry, and was always mild in her resentment. She did not speak against those who had misused her, but would say, "I wish they would not do so; I am sure I would not do so to them."

This amiable trait in her character, we would recommend to the serious attention of all our youthful readers, as an example well worthy of their imitation. Her uncle, in whose family she resided, was sick, and feeling much anxiety respecting him, she was constant in attendance, and unwearied in her exertions. In these efforts she went far beyond her strength, for on the 10th of April, she

took a violent cold, which assumed the most alarming appearance, and fourteen weeks after terminated in death. We would not regret the obstacles to her restoration to health, for in view of the gracious dealings of God towards her, which were so strikingly manifested, we conclude she was an heir of glory, fast preparing for the enjoyment of God himself in his kingdom. About this time, during the early stages of her disorder, her aunt asked her if she thought she should go where her mother was, if she should die, alluding to her triumphant death. This question, while it awakened a filial affection for her dear departed mother, who had gone home to glory, produced a deep solemnity, which was never eradicated, and it is probable was the first cause of her serious impressions, although nothing very particular was observed until about a fortnight after.

On Friday, May 6th, she was suddenly seized with a fainting: her friends became alarmed, which was manifest in their countenances, which Ann Eliza soon observed, and shortly after she was found weeping. To

the inquiry of the cause, she made no reply; she wept much, appearing to be in deep distress, and not until she had been repeatedly solicited, did she make known the cause. She said, "I see by your looks that you think I am in danger of dying; and I am not prepared if I have not a change of heart; I shall not go to heaven with Julia," (a pious sister living in New-York.) Her feelings of grief became so intense, that her friends were apprehensive of the consequences, and endeavoured to sooth her sorrows, and cheer her desponding spirit; but she refused to be comforted, saying with emphasis, "I have neglected the subject long enough, and *it is high time* for me to attend to religion." Some one said to her, you cannot be a great sinner, you are so young, and have always been so amiable, so obedient. She seemed much surprised at the remark, and exclaimed, "I *have* been a *very* great sinner. I have sinned ever since I got out of my cradle." Her grandmother, who was with her during her whole sickness, and who was ever bending over her with the deepest solicitude, reminded her of

the invitations of the gospel, and pointed her to the Saviour of the world, saying, "He will forgive all your sins, and make you his child. He died for sinners, and invites you to come to him and be saved." She continued in deep distress through the day, but still remembering her sister, requested them to write to her, and tell her that she should live but a few days, and likewise to communicate her feelings to her, and the desire she had that she might be born again. May 7th, she was more composed and tranquil, and on the Sabbath following, obtained, we trust, that peace of God, which passeth all understanding. She was now happy, and said, "I hope my sins are forgiven; I love my Saviour, and I love every body. Oh," said she, "how beautiful every thing looks; it seems as if every thing was praising God." She now evinced a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of others, and wanted to have every body love God. Fearing her sister might be led away by temptation, she sent a message to her, warning her to beware of the allurements of the world, to prepare for death, and they

should at last meet in heaven. "Oh, I do want to see her once more; and aunt, and uncle, and Mary—if I could see them all as happy in the love of Jesus as I am, I could die easy." Of her brother, whom she had not seen for some years, she said, "Tell him he must prepare to follow me, and meet me in heaven." To her uncle S. who had, while sick, been anxious on account of his salvation, she said, "How can you be so indifferent? 'To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.' God has raised you from a bed of sickness, and now, because you are better, you don't think any thing about a preparation for death. Don't be so indifferent, now is the accepted time; if you will seek religion, you will find it. You must pray that your sins may be forgiven, and pray to God to forgive them." He answered, "I do." She replied, "Well, I thought once that *I* did, but my heart deceived me. You must be sorry for your sins." Thinking that he did not feel that he was a sinner, she said, "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Still continuing her entreaties with her uncle

she said, "Won't you promise to meet me in heaven, and not be so indifferent?" Here ner voice faltered, and tears forbade her utterance; but after a few moments she continued her importunity, entreating him to come and accept of the offers of mercy. To all this, he replied, that "he could not." Said she, "Well, I thought so too *once*, but I prayed to Jesus, and he made me come to him! O, 'tis *easy*, *do* come, and Jesus will have mercy upon you." Who could resist the eloquence of this dying saint, who was so spiritually taught what arguments to take to wrestle with her God. Her whole soul was filled with the love of Christ. It was the theme of her constant meditation, and the subject upon which she dwelt with peculiar delight. She would often sing of the love of her Redeemer, and language seemed inadequate to express the feelings of a heart overflowing with gratitude. To all who came in to see her, would she speak of the value of the soul, the danger of delay, &c. To a friend who came in one evening, she spoke of the goodness of God, and being asked,

what made her so happy, she replied, "Because I love my Saviour." "And who do you wish to see most in heaven?" To this question, her natural affection would have taught her to say, my mother, but grace triumphed, and she said, "Jesus." "What could you do without him?" "I could not *do any thing*, only sin." "Why do you love him so much?"—"Because he died for my sins." "But is there nothing else that you love him for?" "Yes, because he is so holy and so good." To the question, "Are you not afraid to die?" she answered, "No, Sir." "Had you not rather get well?" "Not if I am going to be with Jesus." "Did you not think you were happy when you were well, and when you could play with your companions?"—"Yes," said she, "I thought I was, but now I don't see any thing worth living for." She had formerly taken great delight in reading the Scriptures, and had committed large portions of it to memory, but now she saw many beauties she had never discovered before. One day, while reading, she exclaimed, "Why, grandmamma, I did not

know before that St. John loved Jesus so much." May 15th, she sang the hymn, beginning with the lines—

> "When I can read my title clear,
> To mansions in the skies—"

and spent much of her time in calling upon her Saviour, that when it should please him, he would take her to himself, that she might see his smiling face. She said to her grandmother, "I wish uncle C. were as happy as I am: when you write to New-York, tell aunt Mary I hope to meet her in glory." She sent various other messages to her friends, and added, "I love all my relations, but I love Jesus best: my mind is all the time in heaven, and to-day I was so happy that I forgot where I was. May 17th, her distress of body was very great, and her patience wonderful. Her sister said to her, "My dear, you suffer very much." Ann Eliza, looking up with a sweet smile, replied, "'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' If I had not repented, I suppose I should

think I suffered more than any body else ever did; but now, when I think of the sufferings of Jesus, I don't feel my little pains; *my* sufferings are *nothing* to his." At another time, a friend calling to see her, and observing her distress, asked her if she did not think it hard that she should be confined to her bed in so much pain. "O no," she replied, "I can bear all things for Jesus." On another occasion, a friend said to her, "How can you be so happy on such a sick bed?" She answered, "Jesus makes me happy, because I love him." She was much afraid that she should show impatience under her sufferings, and would request her friends to pray that she might have patience, and that God might be glorified in all things. Prayer to her was a delight, a holy pleasure. A friend coming in one evening, she said, "I have been wishing all day that some one would come and pray with me." Being asked, if she had any particular request to make, or if she had any troubles or difficulties, she said, "No, I have not any." At this moment a little girl came into the room, and she said, "Pray for that

little girl, that she may follow me to Heaven." At another time, as this same friend was about to pray, she said, "Pray that I may have strength as I pass through the dark valley of death, and that I may be with Jesus; pray for my uncle, that he may repent, and love Christ; for my aunt, grandmamma, and sister, that they may be supported." But, on the prayers of others she never wholly relied:—she loved to pray for herself, and would frequently request that she might be left alone. She always observed the posture of kneeling while her strength permitted, and oftentimes was engaged for such a length of time in this holy duty, that her strength was quite exhausted. At one of these seasons, when she was suffering much pain, she was over-heard by those in the next room to say, "not my will, but thine be done;" and at other times to pray for a blessing on the college and on Sunday schools.

One day, expressing her resignation to God's will, and her willingness to lie on a sick bed, as long as he saw fit, her grandmother said, "Ann Eliza, it seems easy for you to

lie here now; you have a great many friends calling to see you, because it is a new thing; but if you are sick long, they may be tired, and forsake you. What will you do then?" Looking up with an expression of the most implicit confidence, she said, "*Jesus won't leave me.*" To her aunt, who was speaking of her departure, and saying she should be so lonely, she said, "Why no, if you are faithful, Jesus will be with you." She thought and spoke of death with the utmost composure; told them not to whisper in her room, but to talk freely, adding, "I am not afraid to hear you talk about my dying." She had always taken great pleasure in cultivating flowers, and just before her sickness had planted a flower-bed. She was taken out for the last time, to see it. Looking at it attentively, she said, "God has made these come up, if he does not raise *me* up." Her grandmother observing her to be in deep thought, asked the cause. She replied, "I was thinking how every thing praises my God and Saviour." June 13th, a friend who had often called and prayed with her, now came to bid her fare-

well, as he was going to leave town, and should probably see her no more, until they appeared as worshippers before the throne of the eternal God. She was greatly affected, wept at the thought of parting;—said she, "My Christian friends seem nearer to me than brothers and sisters." She was asked, if she loved Christians more than other people? She answered, "I love every body, but I have different feelings towards them, from what I have to others. I love my *enemies*." "But it is not probable that you *have* many enemies." "The enemies of *God* are my enemies." An elderly lady came one day to see her. Ann Eliza waited for her to begin religious conversation, but as she did not, she introduced it herself; and after she was gone, remarked, that she thought from her *looks* that she did not know what the love of Jesus was.

June 18th, she was *very* feeble, but to a friend who called to see her, she spoke of the goodness of God, and her desire to go and be with Jesus. This friend having brought her some fruit, she said, "It seems

as if there never was so unworthy and sinful a creature that received so many mercies and kindnesses from God; I thank you, and I thank God for sending you." She always saw the hand of God in the kindness of her friends. "There are not many poor children," said she, "who have so much done for them as I have. How good God is to me." At another time, to this same friend, as he brought her fruit, she said, "God does not forget the orphan," and added, "I hope you look beyond this world for your reward." In the course of conversation, as they were speaking of the Sunday school, her friend said to her, "What shall I tell the children when I meet them tomorrow morning?"—"Tell them to *repent*, and to repent *now*, for it will be easier now, than if they wait till they are older; and tell them to love God, to pray to him every day."

June 19th. For a few days she had not enjoyed such entire peace of mind as usual, but this day she seemed happier. She said, "Something has been telling me to turn back to the world, but I have been praying for more grace, and I have felt better since. It

tires me to talk about the world, and to hear others talk about it, but to talk of Christ and heaven don't tire me, for I am so happy then."

July 4th. The little dwelling, which ever presented an air of neatness and comfort, and which contained this lovely inmate, this heir of glory, was situated somewhat remote from the centre of the city. She therefore escaped the noise and bustle of this day. A military company, however, marching by, some one spoke to them, the music ceased, and they passed on in silence. She noticed it, and said, "How good God is to make them stop the noise."

For weeks before her death she suffered greatly from almost an entire prostration of strength, and from pain intense and excruciating. Consumption, that disease which has "blasted so many of our fairest buds," was executing its slow, but certain work; it seemed to be prolonging her existence, that she might show forth more abundantly, the operations of divine grace upon her heart. Never was heard a murmuring word from her

lips; never one repining thought; all God's dealings with her she felt to be in kindness.

In all God's works, she ever saw his glory exhibited, and would see her Saviour in a multitude of objects. She would often lie and gaze at the sun, saying, "It makes me think of the Son of God." Once when looking at the sun, she said, "it makes me think of the rays of the Sun of Righteousness." A thunder storm arising suddenly one afternoon, and all nature seemed shrouded in darkness, her mind was much solemnized; and when the storm subsided, and the sun shone out brightly again, she said, "The thunder speaks God's greatness, the sun shows his goodness." She had so strong a desire for the spiritual welfare of her fellow-creatures, that she would weep when told of the death of those who were not Christians. She seemed to feel an unusual regard for coloured people. A pious coloured girl often came to see her, with whose company she seemed much pleased, and would say after she was gone, "I love to look at her, she looks as if she loved Jesus." She

always felt that her Saviour was near to her. to protect and bless her. Being one day accidentally left alone, her aunt coming in, said, "Why Ann Eliza, you are all alone." "No," she said "I am not alone, Jesus is with me." One day, as an aunt of her's called to see her, with an infant child, she said, "I hope little H. will be brought up in the ways of holiness: I expect to see her in heaven; I don't doubt that many children no older than she is, will tune their harps to the praises of Jesus." She gave this friend a little present for H. when she should be of a suitable age, saying, "tell her who it is from, and that she must prepare to meet me in heaven." By a friend, who was going out of town, she sent a message to his sister, with whom she was intimately acquainted, urging her to repent of her sins, and go to Christ, adding, "If she only knew how precious he was, she could not stay away. 'His yoke is easy, and his burden is light.'" As her friends were one day sitting by her bed-side, she suddenly raised herself, and clasped her hands, and in an animated voice, sung—

"Jesus *can* make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on *his* breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Afterwards adding, "I am so happy that I can't live long. I did not think I could be so happy in this world." About a week before her death, she awoke her grandmother in the night, saying, "Grandmamma, I am so full of holy thoughts, that I do not want to sleep;—if I had a *thousand* tongues, they should all praise God." She now expressed a strong desire to go and be with her Saviour, and said, "the more any body has of this world, the more they want; and the more I have of the love of God, the more I want; and the nearer I get to Jesus, the nearer I *want* to get to him. Being told that she must try to compose herself to sleep, she said she was so happy that she did not wish to sleep. She, however, fell asleep in the morning, and when she awoke, was told that a friend who had frequently prayed with her, had been to see her, but went away without disturbing her. She replied, "I am sorry you did not awake

me, it rests me as much to pray as it does to sleep."

August 12th, her symptoms assumed a more alarming aspect. She could this day but faintly articulate; and when asked, if she was ready to die, answered, "Yes." "Are you holy enough to go to heaven with God and the holy angels?" "I want to be." She was reminded of the promise, "they that hunger and thirst after righteousness *shall* be filled."

August 13th, her difficulty of breathing increased. She now viewed death as near, but with perfect composure, rejoicing that she should soon be with her Saviour, whom she loved so much. The portals of the heavenly city were opening for her reception, and she seemed to breathe its purer atmosphere.

She suspected they were making some preparations for the garments of the grave, and smiling, said, "I suppose you are going to get something to put my poor body in, but I hope I shall have a white robe for my soul." At one time, during the day, while they were

changing her position, she was heard to say, "I am sorry;" her grandmother interrupted her by saying, "I am sorry too, that you suf fer so much." "No," she said, "I did not mean so—I did not mean so; I am sorry that I give you so much trouble."

August 14th, Sabbath. This, we trust, was the day of her entrance into heaven.—How glorious the dawning of such a Sabbath, a blessed foretaste of that long eternal Sabbath of rest, which she is to enjoy in the kingdom of her heavenly Father. Lethargy and difficulty of breathing prevented conversation with her friends; but what further testimony could they need that the conflict was nearly ended, the price of her ransom paid, and her soul almost ready to become a glorified spirit in heaven.

About two o'clock, she requested her friends to leave the room for a short time, that she might enjoy one more precious season in prayer;—saying, "You may come in again soon." When they returned, her aunt said, "You have got almost home." She

feebly answered, "Yes." Soon after this, her bright blue eye became fixed in death; her features told, in accents not to be misunderstood, that the moment of release from sin and suffering was at hand. Reason retained her seat until the very moment of dissolution, for when some one said to her, you are almost in the arms of your Redeemer, she smiled, made an effort to speak, but in vain; and at four o'clock fell asleep on his bosom, and awoke, we trust, in his kingdom.

"Her soul was full of peace—
'Twas rather the deep humble calm of faith,
Than her high triumph, and resembled more
The unnoticed setting of the clear day's sun.
Than his admired departure in a blaze of glory
Bursting from a clouded course."

Her course here was short—but how peaceful its termination! She had but begun to live, when a voice of bade her her rise from the darkness of earth, to enjoy without interruption, the presence of her God, in which is light, and purity, and bliss. Her body is in

ruins; but when the archangel shall appear, and sound the great alarm, her "mortal shall put on immortality;" and the spirit now resting in glory, shall assume an incorruptible tenement; and before the eternal throne shall she stand adoring forever.

Ann Eliza has not died in vain. Her short and simple story has been told to many in the morning of life, and some who wept at its recital, because they possessed not her spirit, have since, we believe, bowed to the same Saviour, been made partakers of her high and heavenly hopes, and will, in a brighter world, be sharers of her blessedness.* And, shall those who read her history derive no benefit from it? To those who have grown old in sin, spent their youth in the service of satan, and are now walking on the verge of

* Since the above was written, we have been informed, that a person who stood by her grave, and heard the affecting address, and the account of her happy death, was by it led to serious reflections, which, as he hopes, has resulted in a saving knowledge of the same Saviour whom she loved.

tne grave, without any inheritance beyond but an eternity of sorrow, we have nothing to say. It is to the young that this narration is most affectionately dedicated. *Their* hearts are yet impressible, and may be softened. Could Ann Eliza, from her seat in heaven, speak to you, my dear little friends, she would urge you all to begin early the work of preparation for the long life beyond the tomb. She would tell you that in heaven there is happiness beyond what you can conceive while you live here, and that she has found Jesus, of whom she talked so much, and loved so much on earth, more lovely and precious than she ever imagined before. Turn not from the tone of entreaty, which comes to you from her grave, but seek the path she trod, follow in her footsteps: then when your last hour comes, and friends stand weeping by your dying bed, you will be able to smile at the approach of death, and welcome it as a messenger to convey you into the immediate presence of her Saviour and your's. Before his throne you shall bend together, and as

eternal ages run their rounds, praise him with all your powers, for bringing you to that happy place, where pain, and sorrow, and sin, shall never find admission.

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